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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines methods for students in an introductory speech course at Southern Arkansas University to use microcomputers as essential research tools in class assignments. The outline is divided into seven projects, each with two objectives and a list of activities and procedures: (1) speech of introduction; (2) impromptu speech; (3) extemporaneous speech; (4) demonstrative speech; (5) informative speech; (6) group discussion; and (7) persuasive speech. Instructions on using electronic mail in a class and a list of networked library CD-ROMs are included. (CR)

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"Teaching Technoliteracy: Assignments Requiring Microcomputer Applications in Oral Communication Courses."

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The first computer I ever used in an academic setting was installed in my office in September 1992. I learned Word Perfect and Windows not through manuals or laborious tutoring sessions, but through extensive hands-on experience. In November 1995, I used the same approach when acquainting myself with the new university electronic mail system. Over and over I would go through practice mailing drills, ensuring that my skills were enhanced each day.

In January 1996, I tackled Gopher, a new CD-ROM tower in our university library, Telnet and FTP. Late this summer, Windows 3.11 was installed on all of our updated Micro Quest 486 computers. Inside the Windows program lay the most advanced method by which I and my students could readily access, save and download information from virtually any source: the World Wide Web. The brainchild of Tim Berners-Lee, the Web has quickly supplanted our university library as the method most often used by my students to conduct analysis, write speech outlines and research term papers.

This paper will evaluate the ways by which students in my introductory speech course at Southern Arkansas University (Speech 1113: Principles of Speech) use microcomputers as essential research tools when researching graded and non-graded assignments. I have divided the following outline into areas addressing seven speech projects, and how technology is used as the basis for these presentations. Students must be imprinted into the importance of computers as early as is feasible in their academic careers.

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Assignment 1: Speech of Introduction (Non-graded, 1 minute)

> Objective 1: Know all assignments and tasks students shall be completing through computer technology.

> Objective 2: Be aware of all deadlines and methods of implementation regarding such graded and non-graded speech presentations using computer technology.

Activities and Procedures

I. Introduce students to technology
Instructor solicits feedback from students pertaining to initial nervousness they may have about using computers and relevant applications to speaking in public.

II. Handout on establishing e-mail address
Discuss materials and means of the university electronic mail system, computer center guidelines, and scope of quiz allowing students to activate their respective addresses.

III. E-mail usage assignment
Students are asked to write a short note to the instructor indicating they know how to send an e-mail message. A reply is sent to each student, and copies of all messages are saved by the instructor for verification purposes.

Assignment 2: Impromptu Speech (Non-graded, 1 minute)

> Objective 1: Define specific aspects of effective oral communication delivery.

> Objective 2: Discuss impromptu topic selection and electronic transmittal of items to instructor.

Activities and Procedures

I. Lecture on delivery styles
Feedback is frequently solicited of students if they have any questions about definitions of delivery styles.

II. Specifics of impromptu speaking assignment
Students shall select one topic from three pulled from a desk drawer, and have one minute of preparation time to speak for a minimum of one minute.

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III. Discuss method of turning in impromptu topics
Students submit four separate ideas for impromptu speeches via e-mail. They include the name of a prominent person, one word (love, hate, etc.), a familiar phrase or colloquialism and some aspect of university life. The instructor prints out student topics for class selection.

Assignment 3: Extemporaneous Speech (Non-graded, 2 minutes)

> Objective 1: Know the differences between impromptu and extemporaneous speaking.

> Objective 2: Select extemporaneous speech topics and transmit through electronic mail.

Activities and Procedures

I. Lecture on extemporaneous speaking
What are its components? Why is it important to establish eye contact, keep a conversational tone of voice, yet not consistently refer to copious notes?

II. Specifics of topic selection
Similar to those of the impromptu speech, but with 48 hours for preparation of presentations. Hence, a cleaner speaking style with few vocalics and with more structured content.

III. Microcomputer utilization of extemporaneous assignment
Six topics, similar in structure to those of impromptu speeches, are sent from students by e-mail to the instructor. Copies of these ideas are then chosen as extemporaneous speech topics.

Assignment 4: Demonstrative Speech (Graded, 6-8 minutes)

> Objective 1: Choose a topic for the demonstrative speech, which is the first graded presentation.

> Objective 2: Utilize Gopher on the university computer network to access relevant data for potential demonstrative speech visual aids on poster boards.

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Activities and Procedures

I. Demonstrative speech topic selection
Instructor gives a short lecture on the scope of ideas for demonstrative speeches. Students are told their potential topics must involve a process which can be logically demonstrated from beginning to end.

II. Gopher assignment utilizing visual aids
Students must access Gopher in order to find information which can lead to usage either in a diagram or list format on one poster board employed as a visual aid.

III. Verification of Internet application in speech preparation
One copy of a document accessed from Gopher is attached to the outline turned by each student at the conclusion of each demonstrative speech.

Assignment 5: Informative Speech (Graded, 6-8 minutes)

> Objective 1: Use e-mail to send a preliminary speech outline to the instructor for purposes of evaluation.

> Objective 2: Explain the importance of World Wide Web technology in the process of gathering data for the informative speech.

Activities and Procedures

I. Topic selection and outline construction
With instructor approval, students choose informative speech topics and write outlines with citations coming primarily from sources found on the World Wide Web.

II. E-mail critique of research materials
Students send preliminary outlines to instructor, who evaluates each based on outlining abilities and research materials found in World Wide Web browsing.

III. Documentation of Web sources in bibliography
Student outlines include a minimum of two source citations in each bibliography documenting Web usage. Comments concerning the scope and quality of unique research techniques are sent to selected students through e-mail by the instructor.

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Assignment 6: Group Discussion (Graded, 25-30 minutes)

> Objective 1: Use in-house university computer technology such as the library CD-ROM catalog to initiate the group discussion topic selection process.

> Objective 2: Construct a thoroughly researched preliminary group discussion agenda for the instructor which clearly labels all computer-generated source citations.

> Objective 3: Group members keep each other and the instructor appraised of topic progress or research difficulties through e-mail.

Activities and Procedures

I. Group selection process
Instructor randomly selects groups of five to seven students each for graded discussions, concentrating on controversial issues of public importance.

II. Use of technology in preparing for discussions
Extensive class time is set aside for groups to work together in the library gathering data which is used for both pro and con arguments. Much of this information comes from university resources such as its CD-ROM library, containing ERIC and numerous governmental and regional statistical abstracts.

III. Specific note of source citations
During the course of graded group discussions, students are asked by the instructor to orally state specific facts quoted or paraphrased from computer-generated documents or databases.

Assignment 7: Persuasive Speech (Graded, 6-8 minutes)

> Objective 1: Take advantage of all microcomputer research applications used during the term to craft a logical, coherent and analytical outline structure.

> Objective 2: Use World Wide Web sites exclusively to find persuasive materials suitable for inclusion as visual aids on poster boards.

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Activities and Procedures

I. Unofficial microcomputer speech practicum
As this presentation constitutes the final exam in the course, the instructor discusses all available research resources available to students. Progress on topic selection, visual aid construction and outline preparation are conducted through e-mail and class conferences.

II. Bibliography and outline essentials
Ideally, a minimum of one source citation each can be obtained from Gopher, the World Wide Web and the university CD-ROM collection.

III. Visual aids from Web sites
Students are asked to use World Wide Web pages only to research materials which can be copied, blown up or used as item lists for visual aids in their respective graded presentations.

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How to Use E-Mail in a Class

Beginning fall semester, all SAU students will have access to the Internet and e-mail. There are two e-mail networks available to students; the local University network and the Internet network.

Local University Network:

The local University Network consists of a number of minicomputers. Each minicomputer on the network is called a node and has its own name. Student e-mail accounts are on the node WLSV4 and faculty e-mail accounts are on the node SAU460.

On the local University network, student addresses are their user names. User names consist of the student's first name initial, middle initial (if there is one), and last name (if not too long). Therefore, the user name for John R. Smith would be JRSMITH.

How to Send and Receive E-mail on the Local University Network:

To send an e-mail message to a student, you will have to use the node name and the user name. From PC Mail the syntax would be:

Send
To: WLSV4::studentusername

A student sending you an e-mail message would use the same syntax except the faculty node name is SAU460:

Send
To: SAU460::facultyusername

The syntax requires the address to be the node name followed by two colons and then the user name. There are no spaces in the address and upper and lower case letters do not make a difference. If you are sending an e-mail to another faculty member or administrator, or students are sending e-mail to each other, the node name and the two colons are not needed. The user name alone will work if both addresses are on the same node.

Internet Network:

Once a student has an e-mail account on the local University Network, that student has an Internet address as well. The format for an Internet address for a student is:

username@SAUACA.SAUMAG.EDU

Faculty and staff who have a local University Network e-mail account also have an Internet account. The format for an Internet address for a faculty or staff member is:

username@SAUMAG.EDU

A listing of faculty and staff user names is included on the telephone list. Also, in Internet addresses there are no spaces, and upper and lower case letters make no difference.

How to send an e-mail message through the Internet:

The syntax to send an e-mail message through the Internet is:

Send
To: MX%"internetaddress"

The MX% invokes the software to access the Internet instead of the local University Network. The address to which you are mailing must be enclosed in double quotation marks, upper and lower case letters make no difference, and there are no spaces.

Distribution Lists:

You can send mail to your entire class by using a distribution list that you will create. A distribution list is a text file that you will create in the PCMAIL subdirectory and contains a list of the local University Network user names of the students in your class. Once the list has been created, instead of sending e-mail to your students one at a time, you can send messages to you entire class using the name of the distribution list you have created.

How to create a distribution list:

1. Login to PC mail.
2. Once logged in to PC mail, type the command SPAWN and push return. This will cause you to exit PC mail to DOS.
3. You should be in the PCMAIL subdirectory. On you screen you should see the following prompt:
   C:\PCMAIL
   If you do not see this prompt, enter the following command to get to the PCMAIL subdirectory:
   CD\PCMAIL
   On your screen there should now be the C:\PCMAIL prompt.
4. Use the DOS editor to create your distribution list as shown below:
   a. Enter the editor by typing:
      EDIT filename.DIS
      The file name can be anything up to 8 characters. The extension of the file name must be .DIS
      For example: EDIT CLASS9.DIS EDIT HISTORY1.DIS
   b. Enter your students node and user names in a single column:
      WLSV4::JRSMITH
      WLSV4::JYDOE
      WLSV4::RJMANNIN
      etc....
   c. After you have listed all of your students user names exit the editor and save your file:
      Press the ALT key.
      Press the F key then the X key.
4. Return to PC mail by entering:
   EXIT and push return.

How to send a message using a distribution list:

1. Log in to PC mail
2. SEND a message:
3. At the TO: prompt enter:
   @filename
   For example:
   SEND
   TO: @CLASS9
4. Enter the text of your message and then press CONTROL Z to send your message to all students on the list.

How Students Get E-mail Addresses:

Students will create their own e-mail accounts. Students will go to the Wilson Computer Commons in Wilson Hall room 109 and tell the Student Assistant that they would like an e-mail account. The student will be given the Student Computer Services Handbook to read. After the student has read the handbook, he can take an on-line, open book True or False test covering the material in the handbook. If the student receives a perfect score on the test an e-mail account will be created for that student.

NETWORKED LIBRARY CD-ROMs

The Library recently expanded it's networked CD-ROMs from fourteen to twenty-eight drives. The purchase of two additional seven-drive "towers" was made possible through grants from the U.S. Department of Education and ADHE.

You will note if you select **Library CD-ROM Access** on your Network Services menu, you will find significantly more choices than were available this winter. A brief description of each database is included below. If you have questions about how to use the databases, please call the reference desk (5083). If you have hardware questions, please call Computer Services (5027).

A. ProQuest — The ProQuest database is really made of three databases consisting of seven discs:

ABI/Inform--an index of business-related periodicals including abstracts

Newspaper Abstracts--indexing and abstracting of major newspaper articles

Periodical Abstracts--an index of general academic periodicals including abstracts

B. Intelligent Catalog — An online catalog of books and AV materials located in the Magale Library

C. ERIC (Education) — An index to education journals and documents

D. CINAHL (Nursing/Health) — An index to journals and articles in the nursing and allied health fields

E. Government Documents — An index to publications produced by the U.S. government

F. County Business Patterns — Business data on various sectors of U.S. economies by state and county

G. Statistical Abstracts — Summary of statistics covering the social, political, and economic organization of the United States

H. Enduring Visions — A multi-media history textbook

I. Shakespeare on Disc — Shakespeare's complete works with indexing

J. USA Counties — Demographic, economic, and governmental information for counties, states, and the country

K. Census of Population — Data from the 1990 census of population and housing

L. Census of Agriculture — Production and economic data, land values, farming practices, and other information

M. Economic Census — Information on establishments engaged in manufacturing, mining, retail and wholesale trade as well as construction and service industries

N. Earnings by Occupation — Data from the 1990 census of population for the U.S. on earnings classified by various demographic, social, and economic characteristics

O. NESE Data Bank — Information on key domestic topics for the U.S. related to public policy issues

P. Nat'l Trade Data Bank 1 — Domestic and foreign economic data, import and export statistics, trade information and country studies

Q. Nat'l Trade Data Bank 2 — Index of import-oriented foreign organizations

R. InfoTrac — A periodical indexing and abstracting service including some full-text articles (on a trial basis only)

Please detach and keep as a reference.